

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 24 20 329 in view of Henley (U.S. 3,475,254) or the Admitted Prior Art, hereinafter APA. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the pressure-bonding feature of the present invention, as now described in claims 1 and 8.

As amended, the claims now describe that the *primary green tire and the belt tread assembly are pressure-bonded to each other in a state where the transfer apparatus allows a center portion of the belt tread assembly to swell radially outward by reducing a space between the bead supporting members to cause the carcass layer to press against the center portion while holding both sides of the belt tread assembly.*

The DE '329 reference describes a tread building apparatus including movable segments 34 which move radially inward and outward within a carrying ring 7. Fig. 2 of the reference shows a tread 8 formed on a tread drum 4. Fig. 2 also shows the same tread 8 transferred onto a belt drum 5 atop situation layer 9 of the tire. In operation, the tread 8 is adhered to suction cups 38 attached to the movable segments 34, which are pressed radially inward towards the belt drum 5 to attach the tread 8 onto the situation layer 9, as shown in Figs. 3-5.

The DE '329 reference does not disclose or suggest a pressure bonding process in which the transfer apparatus allows the center portion of the belt tread assembly to swell radially outward by reducing the space between the bead supporting

members to cause the carcass layer to press against the center portion while holding both sides of the belt tread assembly.

The Examiner contends that the feature in which the center portion is allowed to swell is “illustrated in the bottom half of Fig. 2, between the tread and the segments ‘34’.” Examining Fig. 2, the “swell” shown in Fig. 2 of DE ‘329 appears to be the natural shape of the tread 8 and not a swell. Moreover, even assuming that the space between the tread and the segments 34 can be interpreted to disclose a swell, the swell is not extending in a radially outward direction. Further, the swell is not related to the pressure-bonded process since it is only on the drum 4. As clearly shown in Fig. 5 of the reference, the so-called swell appears to be eliminated or reduced during the pressure bonding process. Thus, DE ‘329 does not disclose or suggest the features of the invention for pressure bonding the primary green tire and the belt tread assembly, as now described in the claims.

The Henley reference or the APA are not cited for disclosing the pressure-bonded procedure. Therefore, even if combined with DE ‘329 the cited references still would not disclose or suggest this feature of the invention. For the reasons described above, claims 1 and 8 are believed to be allowable over the cited references, alone or in combination.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunlop (GB 1, 149,722). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Dunlop also does not disclose or suggest the features of the present invention for pressure-bonding primary green tire and a belt tread assembly.

As shown in Figs. 3-5, Dunlop discloses pistons 16. Using compressed air, the pistons 16 force the heads 18 to press against a tread band 11 to cause it to be adhered to a carcass 13. The Examiner contends that the area “between the parts 18” shown in Fig. 5 discloses the existence of a swell in the belt tread assembly.

Applicants respectfully submit that the area between the parts 18 are not swells, but rather the original shape of the tread where it is not pressed radially inward by the head 18 of the pistons 16. It is apparent that the tread band 11 in its original shape is confined by the transfer ring 10 and therefore cannot be swelled in a radially outward direction. Moreover, the Dunlop reference does not disclose or suggest that the swell is produced by reducing the space between the bead supporting members to cause the carcass layer to press against the center portion while holding both sides of the belt tread assembly, as now described in the claims. For these reasons, claims 1 and 8 are believed to be allowable over Dunlop also.


For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

If a Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response is required to make the attached response timely, it is hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response in the above-identified application for the period required to make the attached response timely.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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